

## Here's what you can do to help resolve charges more quickly

- Please schedule all your appointments with us ahead of time, and arrive for your scheduled appointment on time.
- Notify us of any changes to your address or telephone number. Tell us if you will be unavailable for more than 2 weeks.
- Provide your investigator with requested information as quickly as possible. Any details about the charge may be helpful, including witnesses' names and contact information, and documents such as memos, letters, or notes.

## Why do cases sometimes take so long?

We do our best to complete our work in a timely fashion, but several factors can cause delays.

- Legal proceedings take time. Parties to a charge are allowed time to respond to our requests for information.
- People can be hard to find. If our staff cannot reach the parties to a charge by telephone or letter, the investigation can be held up for weeks.
- Heavy caseloads. Investigators can have as many as 25 assigned cases at any one time.
- Staffing changes can result in cases' being reassigned.



Information will be provided in alternate formats to people with disabilities upon request

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# Seattle Office for Civil Rights

## Customer Service

## Our Commitment



City of Seattle Greg Nickels, Mayor

**Seattle Office for Civil Rights**

**(206) 684-4500**

**TTY (206) 684-4503**

**[www.seattle.gov/civilrights](http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights)**

*The City of Seattle Office for Civil Rights has put together this brochure to describe our commitment to you, our customers. If you have questions that aren't addressed here, we would like to hear from you.*



*Germaine W. Covington, Director*

At the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR), we take your business and concerns seriously. Whether you contact us in person, on the telephone or by mail, you have the right to expect professional, respectful service from all our staff.

As we work together, you have the right to receive clear explanations and progress reports from us about your case. At the same time, we will need information and paperwork from you in a timely fashion.

We will:

- Listen to you;
- Let you know your options;
- Explain our process in easy-to-understand language;
- Discuss realistic expectations for your case;
- Offer professional, respectful and courteous service;
- Refer you to other agencies or organizations whenever possible, if we cannot help you.

Questions, concerns or comments? Please contact our Enforcement Supervisor at 206-684-4500.

## Customer service

*If you contact SOCR, we will:*

- Return calls within 2 business days;
- Respond to letters within 5 business days.

*If you meet with an intake investigator, we will:*

- Decide if a charge can be filed within 5 business days;
- Prepare a charge within 14 days of meeting with an intake investigator;
- Assign a charge to an investigator within 30 days.

Sometimes delays are unavoidable. If we cannot meet these standards we will contact you with an estimated time frame.

*If you file a charge, we will:*

- Contact you within 30 days to explain the next steps in the investigation;
- Provide you an update at least every 30 days;
- Notify you within 5 business days if it is necessary to shift your case to a different investigator;
- Return phone calls within 1 business day; respond to letters within 5 business days.

## We are fair and impartial:

- SOCR is a neutral, fact-finding agency.
- We do not provide legal representation, nor do we advocate for individuals or businesses.
- We do not take sides in an investigation.
- We base all determinations on available evidence.